

The Benefits of Eating

WILD ALASKA SEAFOOD

In Plain English



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SEAFOOD**
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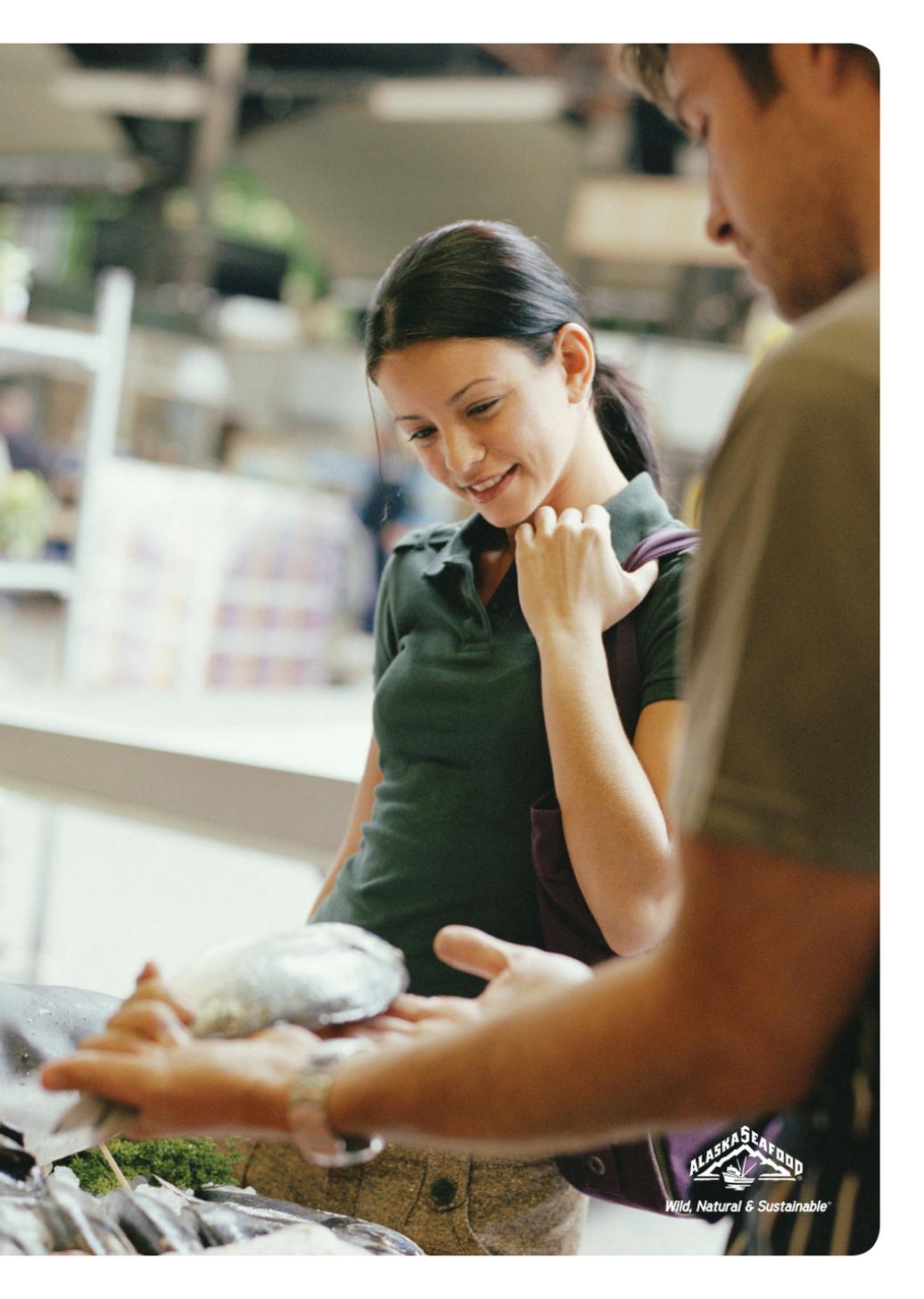
SEAFOOD CONSUMPTION

How much fish and shellfish should we eat?

Did you know that dining on Alaska seafood could enhance your health? Most people eat fewer than two servings of fish per week, the amount currently recommended in the US; Japanese adults consume 2 to 13 times more seafood, eating seafood one to eight times a week. They have less heart disease, 50% fewer deaths from heart disease than American's do, in part because of their seafood consumption.

Americans' low seafood consumption leads to lower intake of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, namely EPA and DHA (eicosapentaenoic and docosahexaenoic acids). These fatty acids occur almost exclusively in seafood and cannot be substituted by the one omega-3 fatty acid found in plants. This is because only tiny amounts of the plant omega-3 are converted to the active long-chain forms.

The benefits of seafood omega-3s are compelling reasons to consume more seafood. Read further about why wild Alaska seafood is so good for you and your family.



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FISH vs. PLANT OMEGA-3s

Why fish is preferable.

When it comes to heart and brain health, nothing beats the power of seafood omega-3 fatty acids.

What about the omega-3s from plants like flax and walnuts? Those foods have only ALA (alpha-linolenic acid), which is much less potent than EPA and DHA. Most of the ALA we consume is oxidized or “burned” for energy. A very small amount, **less than 1%**, is converted to EPA and only a trace amount of this EPA is further converted to DHA.

DHA is part of our cell membranes, this is why seafood omega-3s benefit the heart and brain, immune system, vision, nerve cells and even our gums. It improves blood vessel function in heart disease and decreases inflammation, which is an underlying cause of many diseases.

Many species with the highest levels of omega-3s come from Alaska. These include all types of wild Alaska salmon, black cod plus a variety of whitefish and crab, so you can enjoy delicious meals and health benefits at the same time.



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MERCURY

No worries with Alaska seafood.

You may have heard about the dangers of mercury. Should you be afraid to eat fish? In a word, no. Your health has much to gain from eating fish. In fact, people who eat seafood regularly are healthier than those who do not. In spite of mercury in virtually all seafood, the health benefits outweigh the chances of harm.

Mercury is a contaminant found in small amounts in nearly all fish and shellfish. The amount varies with seafood species, age and diet; long-lived predator fish, such as shark, swordfish, tilefish and king mackerel, have higher levels. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration advises pregnant and nursing women and young children to avoid eating these species.

Harmful mercury levels are seldom found in people who eat a variety of fish and shellfish as most fish have only trace amounts of mercury and are rich in selenium. This nutrient binds tightly to mercury, preventing it from becoming harmful.

Alaska salmon, cod and Alaska pollock have among the lowest mercury levels of all seafood so everyone can enjoy them without worry.



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HEART HEALTH

How seafood protects your heart.

Consuming seafood benefits the heart in many ways, in fact, eating seafood at least twice a week could reduce your chance of dying from heart disease.

Much evidence has shown that eating fatty fish regularly:

- Lowers the likelihood of heart disease mortality by as much as 36%, mainly due to the omega-3 fatty acids in seafood.
- Reduces the chance of sudden death: most sudden heart deaths come from uncontrolled rapid heart rhythms. Seafood omega-3s improve electrical functions of the heart, including heart rate.
- Reduces the inflammatory substances produced in the heart's arteries, improving the function of these blood vessels.
- Decreases the chance of stroke (according to several studies).
- Lessens the chance of a second heart attack and may reduce non-fatal heart events.
- Reduces inflammation, an underlying cause of heart disease.



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PREGNANCY AND INFANCY

Give your baby a good start.

Pregnancy is a crucial time for mothers to nourish themselves and their developing babies. It increases the need for nearly all nutrients, but some are needed at specific times for the proper development of the baby.

Several nutrients, such as selenium and iodine, are abundant in seafood. One occurs almost exclusively in seafood—the omega-3 fatty acid, DHA.

Most maternal diets are low in DHA, so this nutrient requires special attention. Mothers get DHA from food, mostly fish and shellfish. In the last three months of pregnancy, the baby takes large quantities of DHA from the mother. Mothers who eat fish while they are pregnant and nursing ensure that their babies have enough for proper brain and eye development. (Mothers who eat fish while they are breastfeeding have more DHA in their milk than mothers who do not.)



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HEALTHY VISION

Omega-3s for eyes.

Omega-3s are vital for healthy visual and retinal function and may also lower the chance of developing age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Once AMD develops, seafood omega-3s may slow or prevent the development of advanced AMD. They may also help with cataracts, dry eye, glaucoma and other visual disorders. That's why eating wild-caught Alaska seafood is beneficial for vision from infancy through advanced age.

DHA is important for visual development in babies and developing fetuses; long before birth, the developing eye begins to accumulate DHA and after birth, the infant's brain and nervous system continue to grow and add DHA. Eventually, the retina in the eye achieves the highest concentration of DHA of any tissue in the body. (The retina aids in converting light to visual signals, in dim light and night vision.)

DHA promotes healthy visual development in early infancy. Research suggests that the longer infants receive DHA, either from breastfeeding or supplemented formula, the better visual acuity they have at one year of age and beyond.



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BRAIN FUNCTION

Your brain on fish.

Omega-3s from seafood give your brain the mental edge. They are linked to sharper brain function, including neurotransmission (communication between brain cells), protection of neurons from injury and disease, rapid responses to hormones and regulatory substances, and improved brain cell repair and regeneration.

There's an added benefit for cognition and memory that comes from consuming seafood omega-3s: you may lower your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and possibly Parkinson's disease. After pregnancy, increased DHA consumption can lessen the symptoms of postpartum depression. Omega-3s may even help in treating patients with depression.

What's more, a baby's brain needs omega-3s to fuel proper brain growth and development in fetal and infant life. Insufficient intake of DHA and EPA is associated with lower brain DHA content and a greater chance of childhood behavioral disorders such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and conditions affecting movement and coordination.



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IMMUNE FUNCTION

Increase your fish intake to boost your immune system.

Eating Alaska seafood can help your health in ways you've never imagined! Whether you're young or old, seafood omega-3s may tone down overactive immune responses, making your symptoms of inflammation less severe. For example, seafood omega-3s may promote immune system maturation in infancy and lessen the symptoms of childhood allergies or delay their onset.

Research also suggests that increased omega-3 consumption may ease the symptoms of some inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, certain allergies and digestive disorders.

**Note: While seafood omega-3s can work to relieve the symptoms of the conditions listed above, they do not cure them.*



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DIABETES

How to reduce your risk.

Type 2 diabetes now afflicts nearly 24 million Americans aged 20 or older, including some five million people who have the disease, but do not know it. Consuming seafood omega-3s may reduce the chance of developing diabetes and the metabolic syndrome that precedes it.

Evidence suggests that higher consumption of omega-3s or fatty fish may also have a positive effect on glucose and insulin metabolism. These fatty acids also tone down the inflammatory processes that contribute to diabetes. Plus, there is emerging evidence that diets rich in seafood omega-3s may reduce fat tissue. While this could be good news for those with too much body fat (obesity is the leading cause of diabetes), there is too little data for solid conclusions.

Finally, a diabetic person has two to four times the chance of developing and dying from heart disease. Seafood omega-3s reduce several heart disease risks in people with diabetes and those at high risk of it.



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SODIUM

Salt and your health.

Salt, a favorite seasoning, has been used as a food preservative since ancient times and is a source of the essential nutrients sodium and chlorine. These minerals help control water balance and regulate blood volume and pressure in the body. Table salt often contains iodine, a necessary nutrient for thyroid gland function.

Nearly one in three American adults has high blood pressure (hypertension), with the numbers rising. Sodium, largely from salt added to foods, is considered the main culprit behind the prevalence of high blood pressure.

Evidence suggests that eating fish or seafood omega-3s contributes to lower blood pressure, especially in people with hypertension or on weight-loss diets. In addition, these omega-3s act on the blood vessels and the kidneys to help lower blood pressure. Reducing salt while increasing omega-3 intake further lowers blood pressure.

Fresh and some frozen fish without breading or seasoning are very low in sodium. There is approximately 60 to 100 mg per 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of cooked fish. The generous potassium content — up to eight times higher than the sodium level — helps offset the effects of sodium. Canned fish has more sodium than fresh fish, but it can be included in a diet that stays within the recommended daily amount.

Alaska seafood is a great catch when it comes to watching salt in your diet.



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